

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

23 July 1962

MEMORANDUM TO THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: Soviet Moves on Berlin

1. The attached Memorandum, dated 23 July 1962 is forwarded at the request of the Director for your information.
2. It is subject to revision in light of further information on the Rusk-Gromyko talks in Geneva.
3. In any event, the DCI will probably want to hold a substantive discussion on the Berlin situation at the USIB meeting on Wednesday.

*Robert L. Hewitt /js*

ROBERT L. HEWITT  
Acting Deputy Assistant Director  
National Estimates

DISTRIBUTION A MINUS

GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
declassification

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

**S-E-C-R-E-T**

**C E N T R A L   I N T E L L I G E N C E   A G E N C Y**

**OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES**

**23 July 1962**

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: Soviet Moves on Berlin**

1. There are signs warning of serious trouble over Berlin. For some time we have pointed out that the Soviets are in a quandary over their Berlin strategy. Khrushchev has not been willing, perhaps even feared, to back off from the sweeping objectives he set, and to seek a mutually acceptable agreement. Nor evidently has he quite dared to abandon negotiations and seek his objectives through unilateral action. The result has been a long period of procrastination, intermittent and inconclusive diplomatic conversations, plus harassments of varying intensity.

2. After Khrushchev withdrew his 1961 ultimatum last October, the Berlin situation receded into the background as the diplomatic dialogue proceeded. When an impasse in the Thompson-Gromyko exchanges was reached, pressure was

**S-E-C-R-E-T**

**GROUP 1**  
**Excluded from automatic**  
**downgrading and**  
**declassification**

S-E-C-R-E-T

brought to bear on the Berlin air corridors, but this move was not carried to its ultimate conclusion -- Soviet withdrawal from the four-power safety center. Until late May, the Soviets continued to be optimistic that a political settlement would be reached.

3. Since then, however, there has been a perceptible hardening in the tone of Soviet statements and a new sense of urgency. The threat of a separate peace treaty was revived by Khrushchev in mid-May and has once again become firmly imbedded in Soviet pronouncements. To this threat has again been added the warning that the treaty would be signed and implemented with "all its consequences -- the GDR will be fully in control over the ways of communications running through its territory and its air space." Berlin was evidently a principal order of business at the Warsaw Pact meeting in early June, and Khrushchev's private remarks then and subsequently suggest that ways of proceeding with a separate treaty were probably discussed. Since that time, moreover, the Soviets have begun sending strident diplomatic protests over Western actions in Berlin and the East Germans have echoed these with various warnings and threats.

- 2 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

4. In addition, there is some intelligence that new policy decisions were taken by the Warsaw treaty powers; but this reporting is of doubtful quality and has not been confirmed by more reliable evidence. The general tenor of these reports is that the Soviets have decided to seek a "forcible solution;" that they will accelerate the negotiations, and in anticipation of their failure will further aggravate tensions in Berlin in preparation for unilateral moves. According to these reports, some of which are obvious plants aimed at influencing the Rusk-Gromyko talks, this course of action will be timed for late July or August.

5. More important as an indication of Soviet policy is the general atmosphere of hostility which Moscow has generated. The Soviets have moved toward a more openly propagandistic and anti-Western approach to disarmament. Moscow has taken pains to present an unusually sharp image of US aggressiveness and to identify this with the President personally. In turn, this has been used as a justification for stringent Soviet internal economic adjustments. Khrushchev has apparently lost much of his usual interest in a summit. All this seems to indicate that the Soviets are not interested in creating an atmosphere which might be conducive to agreements with the US.

- 3 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

6. The talks between Gromyko and Secretary Rusk in Geneva also suggest that the Soviets have little expectation that an agreement can be achieved on favorable terms. Gromyko's presentation has an air of firmness and finality; on what has become the key issue, the presence of Western forces in Berlin, he has done no more than restate the standard Soviet position. However, even if the Rusk-Gromyko exchanges make no progress, the Soviets may keep open a channel for discussion, if only as a means to control tensions.

7. The Soviets are probably almost convinced that no significant change in the Western position can be obtained without greatly increased pressure. We think it probable that the West will be confronted with such pressure possibly in the immediate future. This might take the form of harassment intended to put the Western negotiators under duress. Or the Soviets may undertake limited unilateral actions, e.g., closure of East Berlin to all Western military traffic. Such moves could be used not only to convince the West of the

- 4 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

Soviet intention to settle the Berlin question on their own terms, but also to bring the Soviets closer to their final objectives.

8. However, the Soviets probably do not believe that such harassments or such limited encroachments on Western interests will force significant concessions; they probably realize that this pressure could have the opposite effect. It is probable, therefore, that the Soviets have already decided that at some point they will, if necessary, go the full distance and conclude a separate treaty with the East Germans. The crucial question facing the Soviet leaders is how to accomplish this without provoking a dangerous Western response. The Soviets could sign an abbreviated treaty which would stop short of a complete and immediate turnover of access controls to East Germany. On the other hand, the Soviets have committed themselves to granting the East Germans full sovereignty over allied access, and, therefore, would not want a treaty to be a mere formality. In any case, in drawing the consequences of a separate treaty we believe the Soviets would proceed cautiously and seek to minimize the risks of their action. Khrushchev has recently confirmed this view, indicating

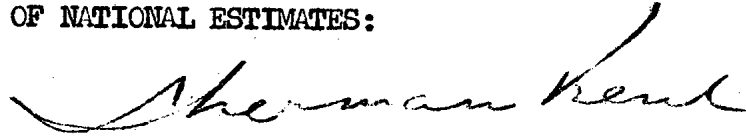
- 5 -

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

that after a separate treaty he would pose a series of minor challenges, each too limited to provoke a sharp Western reaction.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sherman Kent". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

SHERMAN KENT  
Chairman

- 6 -

S-E-C-R-E-T